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SCALING UP NUTRITION – LEARNING AND EVALUATION (SUN LE)

Annual Progress Report

YEAR 2

1 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER 2020

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Contract Number: 72061119C00003

Activity Start Date and End Date: 28 Nov 2018 to 27 Nov 2022

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USAID Scaling Up Nutrition – Learning and Evaluation (SUN LE)

Annual Progress Report Year 2

1 January – 31 December 2020

Submitted to:

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Contract No. 72061119C00003

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|--|
| AMELP | Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan |
| COR | Contracting Officer's Representative |
| COVID | Corona Virus Disease |
| CRF | Common Results Framework |
| DDL | Development Data Library |
| DEC | Development Experience Clearinghouse |
| GIZ | German International Development Agency |
| GRZ | Government of the Republic of Zambia |
| IAPRI | Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute |
| ICF | ICF International |
| IYCF | Infant and Young Child Feeding |
| LOP | Life of Project |
| MER | Monitoring Evaluation and Research |
| MCDP | Most Critical Days Programme |
| NFNC | National Food and Nutrition Commission |
| PA | Performance Assessment or Performance Audits |
| PHCI | Primary Health Care Initiative |
| PMP | Performance Management Plan |
| SUN | Scaling Up Nutrition |
| SUN LE | Scaling Up Nutrition Learning and Evaluation |
| SUN TA | Scaling Up Nutrition Technical Assistance |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| TWG | Technical Working Group |
| UNC | University of North Carolina |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

1 PROGRAMME OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

| | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Programme Name: | USAID/Zambia Scaling Up Nutrition Learning and Evaluation (SUN LE) | | |
| Activity Start Date and End Date: | 28 November 2018 – 27 November 2022 | | |
| Name of Prime Implementing Partner: | Khulisa Management Services, Inc. | | |
| Contract Number: | 72061119C00003 | | |
| Name of Subcontractors: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute (IAPRI) – ICF International (ICF) – The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) | | |
| Major Counterpart Organisations: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC) – 7 Ministries in Zambia at national level – Provincial/district nutrition coordination committees – SUN-LE M&E/Research Technical Working Group (which includes both government and donor representatives) | | |
| Geographic Coverage (cities and or countries): | 30 districts across Zambia (in all 10 provinces) | | |
| Reporting Period: | October – December 2020 | | |
| Funding source/spigot: (if multiple sources, give percentage of each) | Programme Area | Distribution code | % of total amount |
| | EG.3 | 611-M | 19.10% |
| | HL.8 | 611-M | 35.33% |
| | A11 | 611-M | 10.85% |
| | HL.9 | 611-M | 32.13% |
| | A21 | 611-M | 2.39% |
| | A18 | 611-M | 0.20% |
| Planned LOP (\$): | USD 15,975,415 | | |
| Mortgage (\$): | N/A | | |
| Obligations as of December 31, 2020 | USD 4,189,522 | | |
| Does this activity have a costed work plan? | Yes, Year 2 Annual Workplan and budget approved by USAID on 28 January 2020 | | |
| Average monthly expenditures (\$): | USD 147,480 | | |
| Accrued expenditures (\$): | USD 3,687,012 | | |
| Pipeline (\$): | USD 502,510 | | |
| Pipeline months: | 2 | | |

1.1 Scope/Introduction

Scaling Up Nutrition - Learning and Evaluation (SUN LE) is a 4-year USAID-funded project implemented by Khulisa Management Services, Inc. (Khulisa) in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ), and in collaboration with 3 institutional partners – Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute (IAPRI), ICF International (ICF) and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) – hereafter referred to as the “Khulisa Consortium.”

SUN LE provides survey, research, evaluation, and dissemination services to the GRZ *Scaling Up Nutrition* programme and the USAID/Zambia *Scaling Up Nutrition – Technical Assistance* (SUN TA) activity, which seek to reduce childhood stunting in Zambia. SUN LE supports Zambia’s SUN 2.0 programme and stakeholders with key information/data to facilitate learning for improved programme management to achieve SUN 2.0 nutrition goals and to support SUN 2.0 programme accountability through tracking outcomes (Figure 1).

Box 1. SUN LE Objectives

Build a SUN 2.0 evidence base for program and policy decisions through conducting high quality:

1. Baseline, midline, and end line surveys
2. Focused studies, and
3. Biennial SUN 2.0 performance audits

Facilitate individual / organisational capacity to use data through:

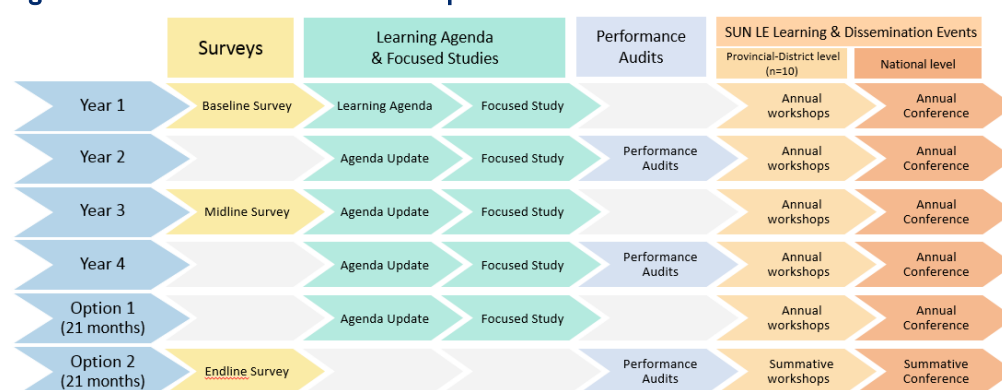
4. Creating a culture of learning and adaptive management

The project’s 4 main objectives are implemented at national level and in 30 priority districts across all 10 provinces. SUN LE’s emphasis on building a learning culture and adaptive management will allow SUN 2.0 to more quickly achieve its overarching goal of reducing child stunting in Zambia than would occur without a learning culture. Accordingly, SUN LE’s learning approach targets SUN 2.0 managers/implementers (at national, provincial, and district levels) and the SUN TA contractor, as they will be the main levers critical to success. Learning and adaptive management at:

- Provincial and district level will be achieved through providing localised nutrition data sets at district level to support the 30 districts in effective planning for stunting reduction; offering vibrant learning and dissemination events; and building the capacity of SUN 2.0 provincial managers to coach / mentor district staff around use of nutrition indicators for planning.
- National level will be achieved through the NFNC M&E/Research Technical Working Group (MER TWG) to enhance ownership and utilisation of SUN LE surveys, research, and special studies; and offering an annual SUN LE conference at national level. Each year, we will conduct a stakeholder customer survey to ascertain the extent of learning and adaptive management that they believe has taken place, and to identify where our learning approach can be improved.

SUN LE is implemented by a Lusaka-based core project management team of 5 persons supported by home office staff and short-term consultants (STTA).

Figure 1. SUN LE Main Technical Outputs



1.2 Summary of Results to Date

The revised SUN LE Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP), approved by USAID on 5 March 2020, consists of 21 indicators. Table 1 shows the list of indicators and their results to date.

Table 1. Summary of Results to Date

| Indicators | Baseline (2019) | 2019 Achievement | 2020 Target | Q1 2020 Jan-Mar | Q2 2020 Apr-June | Q3 2020 Jul-Sept | Q4 2020 Oct-Dec | Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%) | On Target? Y/N |
|---|-----------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--|----------------|
| Objective 1: Conduct baseline, midline, and end line surveys for SUN 2.0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Survey protocol and methodology approved by TWG and USAID | 0 | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | N/A | - |
| 2. IRB approval received for surveys | 0 | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | N/A | - |
| 3. Surveys completed | 0 | 1 | 0 | - | - | - | - | N/A | - |
| 4. Upgraded NFNC website populated with district level survey data and interactive dashboards | 0 | N/A | 1 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.05 | 0.0 | 80% | Y |
| Objective 2: Conduct focused studies | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Learning Agenda approved annually by TWG and USAID | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100% | Y |
| 6. Focused Studies completed | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0.25 | 0.05 | 0.40 | 50% | N |
| Objective 3: Conduct biennial performance audits of SUN 2.0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Performance audits methodology approved by TWG and USAID | 0 | N/A | 1 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 100% | Y |
| 8. Number of Performance audits completed | 0 | N/A | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 75% | N |
| Objective 4: Create a culture of learning and adaptive management under SUN 2.0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Number of NFNC TWG meetings where decisions are made around SUN LE activities | 0 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 100% | Y |
| 10. Number of National SUN Conferences held | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | N |
| 11. Number of Provincial /District Learning Workshops held | 0 | 9 | 10 | 0 | 8 | 21 | 1 | 300% | Y |
| 12. Number of District-level work plans incorporating SUN LE data | 0 | N/A | 30 | 0 | 8 | 21 | 1 | 100% | Y |

| Indicators | Baseline (2019) | 2019 Achievement | 2020 Target | Q1 2020 Jan-Mar | Q2 2020 Apr-June | Q3 2020 Jul-Sept | Q4 2020 Oct-Dec | Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%) | On Target? Y/N |
|---|-----------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--|----------------|
| 13. Number of SUN LE research reports uploaded onto SUN 2.0 website (NFNC website) | 0 | N/A | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 50% | N |
| 14. Number of Policy Briefs and/or other communication products developed based on SUN LE research | 0 | N/A | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0.25 | 0.5 | 44% | N |
| Outcome 1: Increased demand for SUN 2.0 data and information | | | | | | | | | |
| 15. Number of downloads of SUN 2.0 survey data and information from NFNC website where data and information is hosted | 0 | N/A | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | N |
| Outcome 2: Improved SUN 2.0 implementation processes | | | | | | | | | |
| 16. Number of national-level stakeholders who report the application of SUN LE-generated knowledge to inform programme decisions/ policies or to take corrective action | 0 | N/A | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 50% | N |
| 17. Number of districts that demonstrate improvements in Performance Audit scores | 0 | N/A | N/A | - | - | - | - | N/A | - |
| Outcome 3: Increased SUN 2.0 adaptive and participatory management | | | | | | | | | |
| 18. Number of districts that made adjustments in SUN interventions (planning, goals, design) informed by data | 0 | N/A | 30 | - | 6 | 7 | 21 | 100% | Y |
| Outcome 4: Improved SUN 2.0 knowledge systems | | | | | | | | | |
| 19. Number of stakeholders (individuals) who report that a SUN LE output reinforced or validated existing knowledge | 0 | N/A | 200 | 0 | 0 | 391 | 136 | 264% | Y |
| 20. Number of stakeholders (individuals) who report that a SUN LE output provided them with new knowledge | 0 | N/A | 50 | 0 | 0 | 348 | 130 | 956% | Y |
| 21. Number of SUN 2.0 channels/ platforms that share information or data | 0 | N/A | 5 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 160% | Y |

2 ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

2.1 Progress Narrative

During Year 2 of the SUN LE project (January-December 2020), the following major activities were implemented:

RESEARCH/STUDIES

- 2020 Performance Audit: Completed the design and implementation of the performance audit. Conducted preliminary analysis and shared a draft report with the MER TWG.
- 2019 Baseline Survey: Completed quality control and uploaded the final report (and related annexes and PowerPoint presentation) onto the USAID DEC website and the raw data and codebooks onto the DDL website. The report was also uploaded on the NFNC website.
- Focus Studies:
 - Focus Study 1 (Literature Review of Stunting in Zambia and sub-Saharan Africa): Final version uploaded onto the USAID DEC website.
 - Focus Study 2 (Assessment of nutrition services delivery at community service delivery points and health facilities): Completed the study design, received IRB approval, and initiated data collection.
 - Focus Study 3 (Management of Aflatoxins in Maize and Groundnut Crop among Rural Households): Completed the study design and submitted the protocol and tools for USAID review and approval.
 - Focus Study 4 (Monitoring the Effect of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition in SUN Districts): Completed the study design, received IRB approval, conducted 2 rounds of data collection, and presented the results of the first round of data collection to members of the MER TWG.

DISSEMINATION AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Disseminated the 2019 Baseline Survey results to all 30 districts and assisted districts to use the baseline results for 2021 work plans.
- Drafted 4 policy briefs and 4 summary reports based on the 2019 Baseline data. The 4 draft policy briefs and one draft summary report were shared with NFNC and USAID for review and approval.
- Began planning for the 2021 national conference (to be held in April 2021)

SUPPORT TO NFNC

- Supported NFNC in redesigning its website, hosting and management of the newly upgraded NFNC website, and capacity building of NFNC staff to manage the website and social media accounts
- Supported NFNC to draft the Common Results Framework and District scorecard.
- Began design of an interactive dashboard to be installed on the NFNC website with key data points from the 2019 Baseline survey

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Convened monthly progress review meetings with NFNC.
- Provided evaluation and learning support to SUN Partners.
- Held monthly meetings with SUN TA
- Convened quarterly MER TWG meetings

These activities are further discussed below.

2.2 Implementation Status

2.2.1 RESEARCH / STUDIES

Readiness and Performance Assessment (RPAs)

In Year 2, SUN LE conducted the readiness and performance audit whose objectives were to:

1. Determine whether the necessary elements (e.g. enabling environment, inputs, and processes) are in place to facilitate the achievement of MCDP II/SUN 2.0 objectives at national, provincial, district, and ward levels in the 30 priority districts
2. Provide specific recommendations for improvements in core systems, structures, and capacity to ensure better programme implementation, effectiveness, and timeliness.

Design: In late Year 1, SUN LE held a meeting with USAID and SUN TA to review the general PA concept and gain consensus on the PA scope. During that meeting, the general approach was agreed upon and the Performance Audit was renamed as the “Readiness and Performance Assessments (RPA).”

In early Year 2, SUN LE drafted the RPA protocol and tools based on three existing frameworks: the Primary Health Care Initiative (PHCI), the Collective Impact Model, and the Scaling Up Nutrition Strategy. Draft protocol and tools were reviewed with NFNC in early March 2020 and revised based on their feedback. SUN LE then shared the draft protocol and tools with all relevant GRZ line ministries and implementing partners (UNICEF, GIZ, and SUN TA) on 26 March 2020. The protocol and tools were then reviewed in a 5-day virtual meeting from 16-21 April 2020 by relevant line ministries and implementing partners. The RPA approach and tool were pre-tested at national and provincial in Lusaka and at district and ward level in Siavonga district in June 2020. USAID approval of the protocol was received on 8 July 2020. No IRB clearance was sought, as it was determined by NFNC that no beneficiary interviews would be required.

Recruitment, training, and data collection: The project hired two local senior consultants to lead the PA process and 33 local assessors to conduct the interviews. The senior consultants underwent a 5-day training (15-19 June), participated in the pilot testing of the tools (in June), and supported SUN LE to conduct a 10-day training of the assessors (13-24 July 2020). The project hired a computer programmer to program the tool in CSPro software and load onto tablets for use in data collection. PA data collection was carried out in July-September 2020 at national level, provincial, district, and ward levels with officials from the main GRZ ministries involved in SUN / MCDP and with other stakeholders. A total of 546 interviews were conducted across all levels. Data was cleaned over 10 days.

RPA Results Validation/Review: Preliminary results (in a PowerPoint presentation) were shared with NFNC management on 17 November 2020. Updated results (draft report and updated PowerPoint) were then validated in a stakeholder meeting held 25-27 November 2020. A revised presentation and report, based on the NFNC and validation meetings, were shared with the MER TWG on 9 December

2020. Subsequently, another revised draft report, incorporating feedback from the TWG meeting, was shared with the TWG members by email for further review on 10 December 2020.

Baseline Survey

Following the completion of the 2019 Baseline survey in Year 1, SUN LE prepared the data sets and codebooks and uploaded them onto USAID's Development Data Library (DDL) website and uploaded the baseline report and annexes onto the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) website.

Focused Studies

Focused Study 1: A Literature Review of Childhood Stunting: Epidemiology and Determinants in Zambia and Sub-Saharan Africa

In Year 1, SUN LE conducted a literature review to undertake a thorough search of studies on childhood stunting and its determinants, with a special focus on sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and Zambia in particular. In Year 2, SUN LE uploaded the report onto the USAID DEC website and the NFNC website.

Focused Study 2: Community and facility readiness to implement multi-sectoral maternal and child nutrition interventions: An assessment of community service delivery points and health facilities

FS2 assesses the readiness, capacities, linkages, and gaps of community service delivery points and health facilities to implement multi-sectoral nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions in the 30 SUN priority districts. The University of North Carolina, a SUN LE consortium partner, is leading the study.

During Year 2, UNC completed the study design and shared the protocol and tools with stakeholders for review (including a presentation at the MER TWG meeting of 21 May 2020). Upon USAID approval of the protocol on 5 October 2020 (following response to written comments and a virtual meeting on 25 August 2020), the protocol and tools were submitted to the University of Zambia Biomedical Research Ethics Committee (UNZABREC) for IRB approval, which was granted on 11 November 2020, and the Zambia National Research Authority, which granted approval on 16 November 2020.

Forty-eight (48) data collectors (27 males; 21 females) were recruited and trained in late November/early December. Data collection teams were deployed to the field on 30 November and, by the end of the year, a total of 910 interviews out of a total sample of 2760 had been conducted. Before deployment of data collection teams, an advance team consisting of officers from NFNC and line ministries were dispatched to the districts (between 25 November and 10 December 2020) to explain the purpose of the study to district stakeholders, to confirm the status of sampled sites, and to make necessary appointments for interviews.

Focused Study 3: Survey on the Management of Aflatoxins in Maize and Groundnut Crop among Rural Households in Zambia

Focused Study 3 is part of SUN LE's Year 2 learning agenda and work plan. However, due to the outbreak of the COVID -19 pandemic, the NFNC recommended that a study on the impact of COVID 19 on household food security be prioritised instead (see Focused Study 4 below). As a result, SUN LE delayed the design of FS3 until the end of Year 2, with data collection to be carried out in Year 3. The study design was completed, and the protocol and tools reviewed by stakeholders, between 15-30 September 2020. A revised version of the protocol and tools – with stakeholder input – was submitted to USAID on 17 November 2020 and resubmitted on 18 December 2020 with responses to USAID comments.

Focused Study 4: Monitoring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Household Food Security and Nutrition in Zambia

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, NFNC recommended that SUN LE prioritise a study to assess the impact of COVID-19 on household food security and nutrition. This study is designed as a series of bi-monthly household phone surveys. The results will inform short- and medium-term measures to address food insecurity in the context of COVID-19. USAID approved the study on 21 August 2020 while IRB approval was obtained earlier on 22 June 2020. The first round of data collection was conducted in September 2020 and results were shared virtually in a special TWG meeting on 10 November 2020. The second round of data collection was conducted in November 2020, and data cleaned, and analysis is ongoing.

2.2.2 DISSEMINATION AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Dissemination of 2019 Baseline survey results to districts.

During Year 2, SUN LE conducted “district dissemination and data use workshops” in all 30 districts to disseminate findings of the 2019 MCDP II baseline survey and to support districts in interpreting the data and in using the data to develop action plans based on the findings. Workshop participants included district and provincial staff from the SUN 2.0 targeted sectors (i.e. agriculture, fisheries and livestock, WASH, health, social security, and education) and were facilitated by GRZ staff (from NFNC and line ministries) and SUN LE staff. A total of 529 district-level stakeholders – 168 (31.7%) females and 361 (68.2%) males – participated.

To facilitate district-level decision making, SUN LE prepared district-specific baseline data sets in the form of infographics with summary statistics for key indicators. These were used to support districts in using their specific district data for developing action plans. In addition, SUN LE presented the 2019 baseline survey PowerPoint presentation which included district disaggregated data. The presentation made it possible for the district to compare their performance against that of other districts, giving them a wider perspective for interpreting the findings and developing relevant action plans.

Table 2. Excerpt from an Action plan by the Ministry of Agriculture, Chipata District

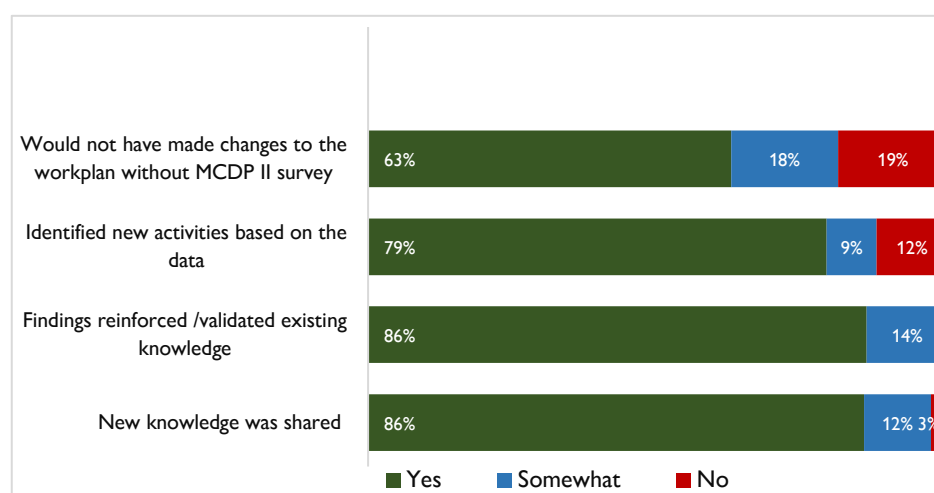
| Decision/Action (1) | Evidence (2) | Program/policy question (3) | Decision Maker (DM) Other Stakeholders (OS) (4) | Indicator/Data (5) | Data Source (6) | Timeline (Analysis/ Decision) (7) | Communications Channel (8) |
|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Sensitize the community on importance of producing & utilisation of nutritious foods | Only 18.4% are producing nutritious foods HH that sold nutritious foods stands at 63.7% (district0) | What is the proportion of the community that has been sensitised on the importance of producing & utilisation of nutritious foods? | -DACO -SAO -District Nutrition Officer -CHO -TSB (FPM) -Nutrition coordinator (NFNC) -Implementing partners (SUN TA, UNICEF, GRZ, DAPP) -Community Development -Traditional Leadership | Number of Community members sensitised | -ppt-SUN 2019 conference. slide 87 | Monthly | -Monthly reports (DACO) -Quarterly reports (DACO/Stakeholders) |
| Conduct TOT trainings for Field officers in production of nutritious crops such as bio-fortified beans, maize, | Only 27.8% of field staff have been trained (i.e. 8 CEOs, out of 31 & 2 BEOs out of 5 for new Chipata) | What proportion of the extension officers has undergone training? | -DACO -SAO -District Nutrition Officer -CHO -TSB (FPM) -Nutrition coordinator (NFNC) | Number of field officers trained | -DACOs office | -3 rd Quarter | -Activity Report to the DACO & Stakeholders |

The workshops' major outputs were the development of a multi-sectoral district-wide action plans (see example of an action plan in **Error! Reference source not found.**) that addressed identified nutrition problems based on evidence from the 2019 Baseline survey, as well as other national surveys (e.g. ZDHS), GRZ programme reports, and other relevant routinely reported data from the health sector (HMIS) and agriculture sector (Zambia Integrated Agriculture Management Information System (ZIAMIS)). The district-wide action plans were multi-sectoral, encompassing sector-specific plans from SUN 2.0 ministries (i.e. Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, WASH, Health, Social Security, and Education).

At the end of each workshop, SUN LE administered a post-workshop survey to assess: (i) district participants' perception of the workshop; (ii) whether participants had gained any new knowledge from the dissemination, and (iii) whether they had utilised the findings of the survey to identify and prioritise activities. The post-dissemination survey revealed that most participants felt that the 2019 Baseline survey produced new knowledge (85.6%) and reinforced/validated existing knowledge (85.7%). Further, most (79%) participants reported that the 2019 Baseline survey findings helped them identify new activities to include

in their workplans. More than half of the participants (62%) reported that because of the district dissemination workshop and the findings presented, they would be making changes to their workplans, which they would otherwise not have made (Figure 4). The report of the district dissemination workshops was shared with USAID at the end of Year 2.

Figure 2. Impact of district dissemination and data use workshops on stakeholders

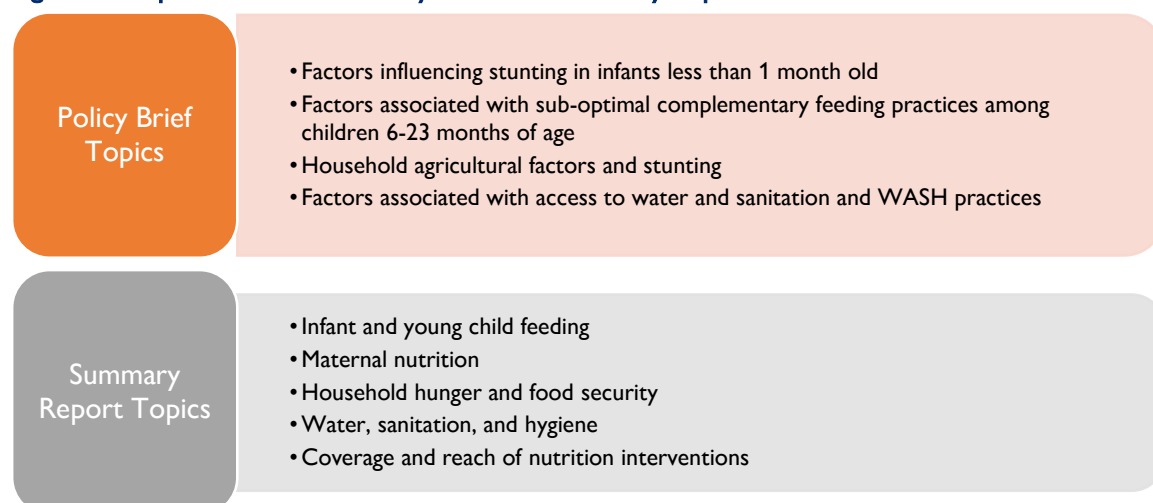


Communications products

Based on the 2019 Baseline survey, SUN LE developed various communication products (summary baseline reports, policy briefs, interactive dashboards, press releases). To identify topics, SUN LE shared the 2019 Baseline report with subject-matter experts who identified themes and later consolidated them with other topics suggested by SUN LE staff and partners, MER TWG members, and national conference participants. A master list of topics was then developed and shared with SUN 2.0 stakeholders (i.e. GRZ line ministries, SUN TA, UNICEF, GiZ, and SNV), who ranked them according to their importance and perceived policy priority. From this process, 4 policy brief topics and 5 summary report topics were prioritised (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

Policy briefs were designed to present key baseline findings for improved policy, strategy, and implementation of SUN 2.0 programmes in Zambia. Summary reports were designed to improve the accessibility of baseline survey findings to stakeholders for use in planning and managing interventions.

Figure 3. Topics identified for Policy Briefs and Summary Reports based on the 2019 Baseline Survey



The communication products were developed collaboratively with subject-matter experts from relevant GRZ line ministries and other implementing partners. GRZ contributors were identified through nominations by the Permanent Secretaries of Health, Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, and Water Development, and NFNC who seconded officers to collaborate in developing the products. Each communication product underwent at least 3 sets of reviews prior to finalisation – the first two reviews involved members of the core development team, while the third and final review was done by other stakeholders outside the core development team.

By the end of Year 2, three policy briefs were submitted to NFNC and USAID for final review and action (see Table 3 for the status of each communication product). Once finalised, the GRZ officers are expected to facilitate the dissemination of the products to relevant audiences.

Table 3. Status of Communication Product development

| Communication Product | Core Team | Status (as of 31 December 2020) |
|---|---|--|
| Policy Briefs (n=4) | | |
| 1. Factors associated with sub-optimal complementary feeding practices among children 6-23 months of age” | MoH, SUN TA, UNZA, UNICEF, SUN LE (ICF), NFNC, SUN LE (UNC) | Internal reviews completed; shared with NFNC and USAID for final review and action |
| 2. Factors associated with access to water and sanitation, and essential hygiene practices | SUN LE (ICF), MWDSEP, SUN LE | Internal reviews completed; shared with NFNC and USAID for final review and action |
| 3. Factors influencing stunting among neonates (<28 days old) | MoH, SUN TA, UNZA, UNICEF, SUN LE (ICF), NFNC, UNC | Internal reviews completed; shared with NFNC and USAID for final review and action |
| 4. Household agricultural factors and stunting | MoA, MFL, SUN LE (IAPRI) | At third (final) stage of internal review |
| Summary Reports (n=5) | | |
| 1. Infant and young child feeding | MoH, SUN TA, UNZA, UNICEF, SUN LE (ICF), NFNC | At third (final) internal review by the SUN LE team |
| 2. Water Sanitation and Hygiene | SUN LE (ICF), MWDSEP, SUN LE,, SUN TA | At third internal review by the SUN LE team |
| 3. Convergence of MCDP interventions | SUN LE (Khulisa), NFNC, | Internal reviews completed and shared |

| Communication Product | Core Team | Status (as of 31 December 2020) |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | SUN TA, GIZ | with NFNC and USAID for final review and action |
| 4. Household hunger and food security | SUN LE (IAPRI), MoA, MFL, SUN TA | Drafting is underway |
| 5. Maternal nutrition | SUN LE (UNC), MoH, SUN TA, UNZA, UNICEF, SUN LE (ICF), NFNC | At first internal review |

Once completed, the policy briefs and summary reports will be used to further engage decision-makers and programme managers around existing nutrition policies, strategies, and interventions in light of the emerging evidence. To foster learning, the policy briefs and summary reports will be used during district work planning to inform the work planning process and to advocate for policy and strategy improvement during high-level meetings. The products will be used as baseline documentation of the gaps identified in policies, strategies, and interventions and they will be used as a basis for tracking progress made over time and also to document facilitating factors and barriers to progress and ensure continuous learning. To achieve this, SUN LE will work with NFNC to ensure the sharing of these products aligns with the timeline for work planning at national, provincial, and district levels.

Lastly, as part of the development of communication products from the 2019 Baseline survey data, SUN LE engaged a Masters of Public Health student from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in a summer internship to conduct further analysis on the 2019 baseline survey data. Working under the supervision of Dr Stephanie Martin, the student will develop two publishable journal articles on the following topics:

- Barriers and enablers of good sanitation and hygiene practices
- What can provinces with high stunting rates (e.g. Luapula) learn from provinces with similar profiles but lower stunting rates (e.g. North-western)?

Planning for 2021 National Conference

Although the project planned to hold national conferences each year, the COVID-19 pandemic during Year 2 delayed or interrupted many activities. As such, the NFNC suggested that the national conference for Year 2 be delayed to early Year 3, and the date of 15 April 2020 was agreed upon. In late Year 2, SUN LE began the planning of the conference, including the identification of an event organiser and exploring alternative approaches to an in-person conference, in the event that the COVID epidemic worsens in Zambia.

2.2.3 SUPPORT TO NFNC

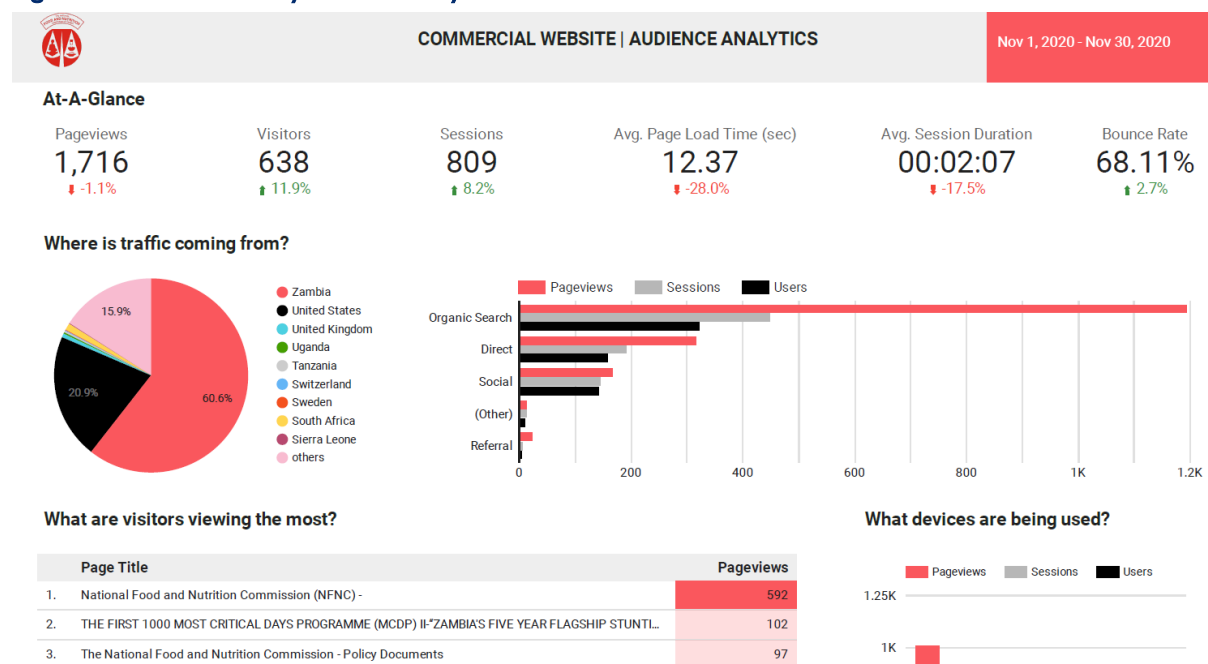
NFNC Website Upgrade

At the end of project Year 1, SUN LE contracted a Zambia-based firm – ProWeb – to assess the NFNC website so as to inform the website's upgrade in Year 2. The assessment, completed in early Year 2, recommended the development of a new website, given that the website's security was compromised. On NFNC's recommendation, SUN LE again contracted ProWeb to undertake the upgrade of the website (see <https://www.nfnc.org.zm>) and NFNC's social media accounts (Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter). The upgrades were completed in Q3 of Year 2.

SUN LE continued to support NFNC with hosting and management of the website and social media accounts through ProWeb. As part of the website upgrades, 5 NFNC staff underwent training on

website and social media management. A manual (and videos) for managing the website and social media accounts were developed to assist the NFNC staff. Monthly website analytics indicate increasing access to the upgraded website from a wide range of geographical regions (Figure 4).

Figure 4. NFNC monthly website analytics - November 2020



The NFNC website will continue to be updated with current content, including SUN LE reports and other documentation. The final round of training for NFNC staff on managing the website and social media accounts was scheduled for late December 2020 but was postponed to January 2021 due to competing tasks.

Interactive Dashboard

SUN LE plans to support NFNC to develop an interactive dashboard to be installed in the newly upgraded NFNC website dashboard. The purpose of the dashboard is to increase access and utilization of SUN LE generated data sets by SUN 2.0 program managers and implementers at all levels. The dashboard will allow disaggregation of data at the district level.

The dashboard will initially be designed to hold the baseline survey results (key data points for the 26 indicators measured in the 2019 Baseline) but will, in subsequent years, be updated to include PA results and results of focused studies. Following approval of the inception, the dashboard layout and dummies were developed and shared with NFNC. The development of the dashboards will be completed in the first quarter of 2021.

SUN 2.0 Common Results Framework

In late Year 1, NFNC and USAID requested SUN LE support to develop a Nutrition Common Results Framework (CRF) and district scorecard for the national nutrition programme. During Year 2, two consultants (one international and one local) were recruited to support NFNC in developing the CRF and District Scorecard. Once drafted, the CRF was reviewed in a 3-day technical workshop involving line ministries and implementing partners. The CRF and scorecard will be finalised in early Year 3.

2.3 Implementation Challenges

COVID 19: Following the March 2020 World Health Organization declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Zambian government directed that all non-essential meetings should be postponed. As such, the following SUN LE activities were affected:

- **TWG meetings:** The first quarter TWG meeting was cancelled while Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 meetings were conducted virtually. Only quarter 4 TWG meeting was conducted physically, with an option for members to participate virtually. Quarter 1 TWG meeting was important for SUN LE as it had planned to present, seek input to, and later approval for, the implementation plans of key activities for 2020 (i.e., the performance audits and the 2 focused studies, among others). As a result, progress toward finalising research designs (e.g. the PAs and 2 focused studies) and disseminating baseline survey results to districts were delayed.
- **District dissemination workshops:** The district dissemination workshops were delayed, as these required travel outside Lusaka and involved participation numbers which could potentially increase the spread of COVID-19,
- **Performance Audits:** Several PA-related meetings scheduled in March could not take place because of COVID-19 travel and assembly restrictions. From the second quarter, SUN LE used online platforms to engage stakeholders.

In addition, the GRZ staff participation in the PA validation meeting was very low, as many were busy with other end-of-year activities. This was because implementation of non-essential interventions was suspended due to the COVID restrictions early in the year. From this experience, SUN LE determined that meetings should utilise both physical and virtual platforms as doing so provides an opportunity for those engaged in other activities to participate virtually without having to spend the time traveling to the physical meeting.

Focused Studies: Other specific challenges were also experienced in respect to the implementation of focused studies:

- **Focused Study 2:** The programming for the data collection tablets was delayed as the originally hired consultant passed away. The project hired a new programmer who worked diligently to meet project timelines.
- **Focused Study 4:** The second round of data collection achieved a 28.6% response rate, lower than the first round which was 33% (1535 households of the total expected 5156). The main reasons for the low response rates were:
 - Poor network connectivity as many of the households could not be reached as their respective telephone numbers did not go through, particularly for respondents from rural districts. The enumerators were therefore asked to continue to try the numbers several times during the survey in case respondents became reachable.
 - Relocation of households to new districts outside the SUN districts was also an issue. Some of the baseline survey households could not be interviewed as they had moved outside of the SUN districts.
 - Some of the baseline households had changed their phone numbers, with some of the numbers allocated to new subscribers. As a result, these households could not be reached.

- Refusals continued to be an issue in this round of the survey, with respondents citing the repetitiveness of the questionnaire as an issue. (The same questionnaire is administered in each data collection round.)

Given this challenge, SUN LE applied for and obtained approval to give an incentive payment of 50 Zambian Kwacha to respondents. This will hopefully improve response rates in subsequent surveys and help achieve the statistical power of the sample. The anticipated reduction in refusals will also minimize the time and resources to achieve the required sample size.

2.4 M&E Plan Update

In early Year 2, SUN LE submitted a revised Activity Monitoring and Learning Plan (AMELP) to align targets against the GRZ planning cycle (January-December), to update the AMELP narrative based on current knowledge, to reword some indicators to make them more specific, to remove three indicators, and to add one new indicator. In addition, editorial changes were made to improve clarity, reduce redundancy, and cut out unnecessary detail. The revised AMELP was submitted to USAID on 29 January 2020 and approved on 5 March 2020.

3 INTEGRATION OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

3.1 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

SUN LE project continues to espouse positive gender considerations in all our work. The project continues to track participation by gender in project activities such as MER TWG Meetings, conferences, dissemination meetings, stakeholder meetings, planning meetings, surveys, and performance assessments, among others.

Key project activities held during the reporting period, and the gender breakdown of participants in these activities, are summarised in Table 4.

Gender equality in SUN LE activities has been fair. Participation in the TWG has been dominated by females while participation in the district level dissemination and data use workshops was dominated by males. Gender participation in meetings/workshops is a reflection of the gender disparity in the staff occupying the target positions. For activities where SUN LE directly hire short term staff – such as RPA and focused study data collectors, gender parity was nearly achieved.

Table 4. Gender participation in Key SUN LE activities

| Activity | Dates | No. Participants | Participants by Gender |
|--|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| MER TWG meetings | 21 May 2020, | Q2 -41 attendees | Q2 - 36% male and 64% female; |
| | 3 September 2020 | Q3 -21 attendees | Q3 - 38% male and 62% female |
| | 9 December 2020 | Q4 -25 attendees | Q4 - 39% male and 61% female |
| District dissemination and data use workshops - Lusaka | Various dates between July and October | 529 participants | 68% male and 32% female |
| RPA field work team | Data collection 3 August to 16 September | 33 data collectors recruited | 45% male and 55% female |
| Common Results Framework – | 2-4 December 2020 | 46 Participants | 45.7% male and 54.3% female |

| Activity | Dates | No. Participants | Participants by Gender |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| technical review workshop | | | |
| Focused Study 2 | Data Collector training November 2020 | Quantitative - 40 data collectors | 57% male and 43% female |
| | | Qualitative - 8 data collectors | 50% male and 50% female |
| Focused Study 4 | Data Collection Round 1 (September) | 45 data collectors | 38% male and 62 % female |
| | Data collection Round 2 (November) | | 45% male and 55 % female |

3.2 Sustainability Mechanisms

During the reporting period, SUN LE ensured that the Zambian government was engaged in all project activities to ensure government ownership and increase the potential for sustainability. The following were the specific ways in which the government was involved:

Common Results Framework: SUN LE supported NFNC with 2 consultants for developing the Nutrition CRF (per section 2.2.3 above) scorecard. The CRF is envisioned as the document to coordinate the multi-sectoral response for improving nutrition outcomes in Zambia – by identifying key results for each sector and how these will be sustained.

NFNC Website: Through the contract with ProWeb, SUN LE supported NFNC with an upgrade of the NFNC website and training around hosting and management of the website and social media accounts. The upgraded website will enable NFNC to fulfil its key role as a hub of much-needed nutrition information to stakeholders and the Zambian public.

Development of communication products: In developing the communication products, SUN LE engaged the participation of subject experts from relevant line ministries as well as other stakeholders from SUN TA and UNICEF. This collaborative approach is expected to build ownership, build skills and capacity, and foster sustainability among all stakeholders in the SUN 2.0 programme.

Implementation of district dissemination and data use workshops: The project built the capacity of GRZ and NFNC staff to facilitate the district dissemination and data use workshops. Ten (10) workshops were independently facilitated by NFNC in 10 districts, while the remaining 20 workshops were jointly facilitated by SUN LE and GRZ staff. SUN LE oriented all facilitators to ensure a standard approach.

Focused studies: Representatives from Zambian institutions were engaged as co-investigators in the focused studies per Table 5.

Table 5. Zambian investigators in SUN LE focus studies

| Name of study | Institution and Name of Zambian Co-investigators |
|---|--|
| Focus Study 2: Facility and Community Services Delivery | Ministry of Health – Agness Aongola |
| | NFNC – Mike Mwanza |
| Focused Study 3: Aflatoxin Study | Zambia Agriculture Research institute (ZARI) – Mathias Ndhlovu |
| Focused Study 4: Impact of COVID-19 on SUN households | IAPRI- Indaba Agriculture Policy Research Institute |

Performance Audits: To facilitate sustainability, the project worked closely with NFNC during all steps of the design and implementation of the PA. In addition, line ministry focal points participated in the RPA's design, pilot testing, supervision of data collection, and validation of draft report. This process ensured that local stakeholders engage with the results, own the process, and acquire the skills to conduct internal PAs.

3.3 Environmental Compliance

Not Applicable. USAID issued a Categorical Exclusion for this project. However, Khulisa will notify the Contracting Officer immediately if any SUN LE activity has a negative impact on the environment during implementation.

3.4 Youth Development

Nothing to report.

3.5 Policy and Governance Support

The support for developing the SUN 2.0 Common Results Framework (discussed in section 2.2.3 above) will assist in improving the governance of nutrition-related service delivery. In addition, the results of the RPA will facilitate a better program management for overall collective impact at national and sub national levels.

3.6 Local Capacity Development

SUN LE builds the capacity of key SUN 2.0 stakeholders to implement learning and evaluation activities for improved management of the programme. During Year 2, the following measures were put in place to build local capacity:

Development of communication products: The development of communication products (discussed in sections 2.2.2), was designed to strengthen skills based on the concept of “learning by doing.” By involving Zambian subject experts in developing communication products, SUN LE provides a two-way learning opportunity where they can share their knowledge while also developing their capacity to produce such products in the future.

District dissemination and data use workshops: SUN LE collaborated with GRZ line ministries in facilitating the district dissemination and data use workshops. As mentioned above, NFNC staff led the workshops in 10 districts and jointly facilitated them in the remaining districts. Prior to launching the workshops, SUN LE oriented the GRZ staff on the approaches. GRZ staff successfully implemented the workshops and submitted all workshop deliverables, i.e. the district action plans and brief workshop reports.

NFNC website: Through ProWeb, SUN LE built the capacity of 5 NFNC staff to manage the newly upgraded website and social media accounts.

Readiness and Performance Assessment: SUN LE collaborated with the GRZ staff throughout the design and implementation stages of the RPA. In addition to ensuring the ownership of the RPA process, the participation of GRZ staff was meant to impart them with knowledge and skills to appreciate and conduct internal RPA on their own in future.

3.7 Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Global Development Alliance (GDA) Impacts

Nothing to report for this period.

3.8 Conflict Mitigation

Nothing to report for this period.

3.9 Science, Technology, and Innovation Impacts

Nothing to report for this period.

4 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

The SUN LE project values strong engagement with all stakeholders in the planning and implementation of its activities. As such, meetings and other forums are important platforms being used to share programme updates and plans to ensure a shared understanding of the implementation of the SUN programme and increase buy-in from stakeholders. During this reporting period, stakeholders were involved through the following forums:

4.1 Collaboration with NFNC

NFNC is SUN LE's main GRZ counterpart with whom the project has regular meetings to consult and share updates and plans. These meetings have resulted in a level of synergy and facilitated the identification of opportunities for SUN LE support and joint implementation of SUN activities. Meetings held between NFNC and SUN LE during this reporting period include, among others:

- One meeting held on 25 February 2020 to discuss NFNC comments on the Baseline survey. The meeting discussed all the issues raised and the project finalized the report based on the meeting consensus.
- Two meetings held on 25 and 26 February 2020 to discuss the planned district level dissemination workshops. The meeting discussed the most appropriate approaches to disseminating the baseline survey results to the districts within a short period.
- One meeting held on 13 March 2020 to plan for the TWG meeting with NFNC. The meeting agreed on the agenda and modalities for the Q1 TWG meeting – planned for 19 March 2020 – but which did not take place due to COVID-19 fears.
- Throughout the year, SUN LE and NFNC held several virtual meetings to organize MER TWG meetings, plan for district dissemination and jointly recruit, and plan for RPA and CRF. Meetings were also held to discuss the timing of the national conference and the midline survey, the hosting of the interactive dashboard on the NFNC website and plans for district dissemination/data use meetings.

In planning for the RPA, the project ensured that NFNC was fully involved in all the processes of the performance audits. In addition to the joint recruitment of RPA consultants, NFNC was involved in the review and revision of RPA protocol and tool, orientation of senior consultants, planning for pre-test and the actual pre-test, training of assessors, and supervision of data collection.

NFNC was also involved in developing the roadmap for developing the CRF, recruiting the CRF consultants, and in weekly meetings to review the development of the CRF.

4.2 GRZ Participation in SUN LE Activities

As SUN 2.0 is a multi-sectoral programme, SUN LE ensures the involvement of GRZ staff from the main line ministries (Agriculture, Health, Water and Sanitation, Community Development, etc.) to ensure the sustainability of project activities. During the reporting period, GRZ staff were involved in several SUN LE activities, including:

- **RPA:** Review of RPA protocol and tools through a 5-day virtual meeting, training of RPA assessors, supervision of RPA data collection and validation of draft report (through a 3-day workshop)
- **FS2:** Two GRZ staff serve as co-investigators in this focused study. Through the MER TWG, GRZ line Ministry staff provided input in the FS2 protocol. Focal point persons from all line ministries MoH, MoA, MoFL, MCDSS, MWDSEP, and NFNC visited the district as part of an advance party to introduce the study to district counterparts, assess the sampled sites, and collect the necessary information to guide the data collection teams.
- **FS3:** Two GRZ staff were involved as co-investigators. Through the MER TWG, GRZ line Ministry staff provided input to the FS3 protocol.
- **FS4:** Two GRZ staff were involved as co-investigators. Through the MER TWG, GRZ line Ministry staff provided input on the FS4 protocol. The TWG also provided feedback on the initial preliminary results through a virtual meeting.
- **District dissemination and data use workshops:** Upon orientation by the SUN LE team, NFNC staff and focal point from line ministries participated in the district dissemination and data use workshops as facilitators/co-facilitators.

4.3 MER Technical Working Group Meeting

The membership of the Monitoring and Evaluation and Research TWG consists of representatives from NFNC, GRZ, cooperating partners, and donors. During the reporting period, three TWG meetings were held: 21 May 2020; 3 September 2020, and 9 December 2020. The May and September meetings were completely virtual while the December meeting was mixed (virtual and in-person). In addition, SUN LE, through NFNC, convened a special MER TWG meeting to share the results of the first round of Focused Study 4. Participation in the meetings ranged from 21 to 45 participants.

4.4 Evaluation and Learning Support to Other SUN 2.0 Implementation Partners

SUN LE project provided guidance on the SUN indicators to UNICEF which was important for their project design. A separate analysis was done for the UNICEF SUN districts to provide them with consolidated reports for the 15 districts they support. SUN LE also conducted further analysis of the baseline results to provide estimates for the 17 UNICEF supported districts as requested by UNICEF for planning the SUN programme in their district.

The project also provided technical support towards verifying GIZ's Baseline survey results for two districts that were not part of the 2019 baseline survey. The GIZ baseline was conducted separately by IAPRI using SUN LE's MCDP II baseline survey tool. In addition, SUN LE team provided input to the SNV-supported baseline survey report for Mporokoso, Mungwi, and Lunte districts.

SUN LE received a request from DFID through USAID to reanalyse the baseline data to calculate the DALYS and LiST as a result of implementing the MCDP II program. The project is in the process of assessing the financial requirements to undertake this task, under different options.

4.5 Monthly meetings with SUN TA

SUN LE seeks to develop close collaboration and strengthen strong working relationships with SUN TA, by scheduling monthly meetings. During the year under review, several scheduled and unscheduled meetings were held between the two projects to review activities, plan jointly, and review the factor affecting both projects (e.g. COVID 19). However, a number of scheduled meetings were not held due to competing priorities. Nevertheless, ad hoc consultations between the teams on specific program-related issues did take place.

4.6 Monthly meetings with USAID

Monthly meetings with USAID is a platform that enables the project to provide high-level updates on project operations and to seek COR guidance on various aspects of project implementation. During the year, a total of 7 monthly meetings were held (1 in Q1, 3 in Q2, 2 in Q3, and 1 in Q4). Besides monthly meetings, other meetings were convened to discuss specific issues – for example, two virtual meetings (held in Q3 and Q4) to discuss FS2 and the approach to LiST and DALYS analyses.

5 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

During the 2019 Baseline survey, the project ended up paying VAT (equivalent to USD 8,627) on vehicle hire as part of IAPRI's subcontract to carry out fieldwork. Because IAPRI does not have tax-exempt status, it had to pay the full cost of transport hire, VAT inclusive. We have applied to the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) for a refund of the VAT, given that the activity was under the SUN LE project, which has a tax exemption. A decision on the refund is yet to be reached by ZRA management, but SUN LE has continued to follow up with ZRA.

In addition, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GRZ issued social distancing guidelines to mitigate the risk of COVID-19. Lusaka-based SUN LE staff have mostly worked remotely in the latter part of the year. The government's social distancing guidelines remain the same, and SUN LE Lusaka staff will continue to observe the same working arrangement until further guidance from GRZ and improvements in COVID 19 infection rates.

6 LESSONS LEARNED

A few key lessons were learned from activities implemented during the reporting period:

- **Use of online platforms:** Due to the increasing use of online platforms in the wake of COVID - 19, SUN LE has learned that online meeting platforms – for workshops or group meetings – are a reasonable alternative when face-to-face meetings are not possible. However, we noted a relatively lower level of engagement among participants, especially at lower levels compared to in-person meetings. Participants are less likely to ask questions and give feedback on what was discussed during the meetings. While we suspect that this could be due to their unfamiliarity with the technology, we believe this is something that could improve with increased use. We also note that our key stakeholders – namely government counterparts – have varying capacities (equipment, skills, infrastructure, etc.) to participate in virtual or online meetings.

Therefore, SUN LE will keep alert to adapting its approach to ensure maximum stakeholder input in spite of this challenge. This may entail extending deadlines, allowing more time for consultation, and the use of multiple media to increase interaction. Where possible, SUN LE has and plans to continue to support stakeholders with airtime and internet to enhance their participation.

- **Involvement of provincial-level management is key:** In the implementation of the SUN program, communication from the national level to the lower level often flows directly to the districts, bypassing provincial teams. In the case of PA fieldwork in Western Province, for example, this caused some resistance from the provincial level, delayed implementation, and discouraged provincial-level ownership. Based on this experience, SUN LE will intentionally liaise with provincial-level staff on planned activities to supplement/reinforce communication flowing from the national level about SUN LE planned activities.
- **Increasing capacity of GRZ staff to implement activities enhances the efficiency of implementation, and is key to long term sustainability:** During the dissemination and data use workshops, SUN LE's engagement of GRZ to implement the workshops fostered ownership and increased the chance of institutionalizing data use for decision making. Following SUN LE's orientation with NFNC and line ministry staff on how to implement the workshops, GRZ staff were able to independently lead the implementation of the activity with much success. By continuing to collaborate with GRZ staff in the implementation of SUN LE activities, the use of a systematic approach to using data in programme decisions will be an approach that GRZ will institutionalise and sustain.
- **Sending an advance GRZ team to the districts helps improve the clarity of planned studies among local stakeholders and supports ownership, cooperation, and the seamless rollout of the study.** Prior to the rollout of FS2, SUN LE dispatched a team of GRZ staff involved in the SUN program to introduce the FS2 study to the provincial and district counterparts, obtain useful contacts and share with the data collections teams, make appointments for the data collection teams and counter check the status of the sampled sites. This process allowed a very smooth start and implementation of the FS2 data collection.

7 PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR 3 INCLUDING UPCOMING EVENTS

During Year 3 (January-December 2021), SUN LE will finalise the RPA report and obtain approval from USAID and clearance of the report from NFNC. The project team will also work with NFNC and stakeholders to convene the second national MCDP II conference where the results of the RPA, FS2, and FS4 will be presented and discussed. The project also plans to complete the ongoing focused studies (i.e. FS2, FS3, and FS4). Following USAID approval and NFNC clearance of both the RPA and FS2 reports, SUN LE will work collaboratively with NFNC and implementing partners to disseminate the findings to the districts and provinces for incorporation into annual workplans and for improving SUN implementation/service delivery.

In consultation with all stakeholders, SUN LE will plan, design, and implement two focused studies to inform the implementation of SUN 2.0 program.

During Year 2, NFNC and SUN LE discussed the utility of delaying the midline survey for 1 year because of the delayed implementation of SUN 2.0 in many districts. Although USAID has technically approved this, a contract amendment has not yet been issued. Thus, in preparation for the midline survey in Year 4, SUN LE will convene forums to review the midline survey approach, indicators and their definitions, and present the protocol and the tools through required approval processes (USAID, line ministries, IRB, and NHRA).

SUN LE will complete internal review and editing of the common results framework and district scorecard, and convene a one-day stakeholder validation workshop before the CRF can be cleared by NFNC and endorsed.

We will also complete the development of the remaining communication products targeting various audiences (1 policy brief, 4 summary reports, and, interactive dashboard) based on the 2019 Baseline Survey data and share these with relevant audience. SUN LE will also support the newly upgraded NFNC website by providing website hosting support through a local company hired by the project.

Further, we will continue stakeholder engagement mainly through monthly calls with NFNC, SUN TA, USAID, and other partners and sectors as per need.

Table 6. Overview of planned activities in Year 3

| Activity | Target Due Dates |
|--|------------------|
| Research / Studies | |
| Finalise RPA report and obtain USAID approval and NFNC Clearance | Q1 |
| Complete data collection for FS2, complete first draft of report (validated by stakeholders) | Q1 |
| Receive USAID approval of FS3 study as well as IRB and NRA approvals | Q1 |
| Conduct FS3 data collection | Q2 |
| Present bi-monthly results from FS-4 to MER TWG on a monthly basis | Q1 and Q2 |
| Develop draft design of FS5 | Q1 |
| Develop draft design of FS6 | Q1 |
| Update midline survey protocol and tools | Q3 and Q4 |
| Conduct FS5 data collection | Q3 and Q4 |
| Conduct FS6 data collection | Q3 and Q4 |
| Dissemination and Learning Activities | |
| Complete development of communication products (policy briefs, summary reports) based on the 2019 baseline survey results | Q1 |
| Convene national dissemination conference | Q2 |
| Conduct dissemination of the district-level RPA and FS2 results and assist districts in using their results for their work plans | Q2 and Q3 |
| Design communication products based on the RPA and FS2 | Q3 and Q4 |
| Support to NFNC | |
| Continue to support the hosting and management of the newly upgraded NFNC website | Q1-Q4 |
| Finalize the common results framework and district scorecard | Q1 |
| Develop interactive dashboard, and install dashboard on NFNC website with key data points from baseline survey | Q1 |
| Stakeholder engagement | |
| Convene monthly progress review meeting with NFNC | Q1-Q4 |
| Provide evaluation and learning support to SUN Partners | Q1-Q4 |
| Hold monthly meetings with SUN TA | Q1-Q4 |

8 WHAT DOES USAID NOT KNOW THAT IT NEEDS TO?

None

9 HOW SUN LE ADDRESSED A/COR COMMENTS FROM THE LAST QUARTERLY OR SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

The comments received on the Year 1 annual report were satisfactorily addressed, leading to USAID approval of the report on 19 March 2020

ANNEX A: PROGRESS SUMMARY

Table 7. PMP Indicator progress - USAID Standard Indicators and Project Custom Indicators

| Indicator | Data Source | Baseline data | | 2019 Achieve ment | 2020 Cumulative Target | | Quarterly Status –2020 | | | | Annual Performance Achieved to Date (in %) | Comment(s) |
|---|---|---------------|-------|-------------------|------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| | | Year | Value | | Planned | Actual | Q1 (Jan-Mar) | Q2 (Apr-Jun) | Q3 (Jul-Sep) | Q4 (Oct-Dec) | | |
| Objective 1: Conduct baseline, midline, and end line surveys for SUN 2.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Survey protocol and methodology approved by TWG and USAID | Minutes of meetings with NFNC and USAID correspondence indicating approval | 2019 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | - | - | N/A | Only planned for Yr1 and Yr3 |
| 2. IRB approval received for surveys | IRB approval letter | 2019 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | - | - | N/A | Only planned for Yr1 and Yr3 |
| 3. Surveys completed | Documents (e.g. minutes of meetings with NFNC and USAID correspondence) indicating approval | 2019 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | - | - | N/A | Only planned for Yr1 and Yr3 |
| 4. Upgraded NFNC website populated with district level survey data and interactive dashboards | NFNC Website | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 1 | 0.80 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 0.05 | 0.0 | 80% | The website has been upgraded and is live and available to the public Social media accounts have also been created/ reactivated and 5 NFNC staff are being trained on website maintenance and social media management on a monthly basis |

| Indicator | Data Source | Baseline data | | 2019 Achieve ment | 2020 Cumulative Target | | Quarterly Status –2020 | | | | Annual Performance Achieved to Date (in %) | Comment(s) |
|---|---|---------------|-------|-------------------|------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| | | Year | Value | | Planned | Actual | Q1 (Jan-Mar) | Q2 (Apr-Jun) | Q3 (Jul-Sep) | Q4 (Oct-Dec) | | |
| Objective 2: Conduct focused studies | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Learning Agenda approved annually by TWG and USAID | SUN LE Project internal monitoring system. Documents (e.g. minutes of meetings with NFNC and USAID correspondence) indicating approval. | 2019 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100% | The SUN LE Learning Agenda was approved by USAID on 28 January 2020. The Project Learning Agenda was not submitted to NFNC for approval as it is extracted from the national nutrition learning agenda developed by the MER TWG |
| 6. Focused Studies completed | SUN LE Project internal monitoring system. Documents (e.g. minutes of meetings with NFNC and USAID correspondence) indicating approval. | 2019 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0.3 | 0 | 0.25 | 0.05 | 0.40 | 50% | FSs were delayed by COVID-19 and will only be completed in Year 3. Draft designs for FS-2 and FS-4 were completed. FS-4 was approved by USAID on 4 Sep 2020 while FS-2 was approved by USAID during this reporting period (5 October). |
| Objective 3: Conduct biennial performance audits of SUN 2.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Performance audits methodology approved by TWG and USAID | SUN LE Project internal monitoring system. Documents (e.g. minutes of meetings with NFNC and USAID) indicating approval | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 100% | Performance audit methodology and tools were reviewed by members of the MER TWG from 15-21 April 2020. The protocol received USAID approval on 8 July 2020 |

| Indicator | Data Source | Baseline data | | 2019 Achieve ment | 2020 Cumulative Target | | Quarterly Status –2020 | | | | Annual Performance Achieved to Date (in %) | Comment(s) |
|---|---|---------------|-------|-------------------|------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|---|
| | | Year | Value | | Planned | Actual | Q1 (Jan-Mar) | Q2 (Apr-Jun) | Q3 (Jul-Sep) | Q4 (Oct-Dec) | | |
| | correspondence) indicating approval. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Number of Performance audits completed | SUN LE Project internal monitoring system. Documents (e.g. minutes of meetings with NFNC and USAID correspondence) indicating approval. | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 1 | 0.75 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 0.25 | 75% | Data collection was completed in the reporting quarter. Data cleaning (initiated in Q3), analysis, and preliminary results to be completed in Q4. |
| Objective 4 Create a culture of learning and adaptive management under SUN 2.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Number of NFNC TWG meetings where decisions are made around SUN LE activities | Minutes of meetings | 2019 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 100% | The Q1 TWG meeting – planned for March 19 2020 was called off due to the risk of COVID-19. Virtual meetings were conducted in Q2 (21 May 2020), Q3 (September 2020), and Q4 (9 December 2020) |
| 10. Number of National SUN Conferences held | Conference proceedings | 2019 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | National conference has been postponed to Q2/2021 |
| 11. Number of Provincial /District Learning Workshops held | Proceedings of workshops and provincial workplans | 2019 | 0 | 9 | 10 | 30 | 0 | 8 | 21 | 1 | 300% | 30 dissemination workshops have been conducted so far reaching a total of 529 participants. Two (2) of the workshops were virtual while the rest were in person |

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|--|--------------------------|---------------|-------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| | | Year | Value | | Planned | Actual | Q1 (Jan- Mar) | Q2 (Apr- Jun) | Q3 (Jul- Sep) | Q4 (Oct- Dec) | | |
| 12. Number of District-level work plans incorporating SUN LE data | District Impact Stories | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 30 | 30 | 0 | 8 | 21 | 1 | 100% | Of all the 30 districts where dissemination of the baseline results was done, 6 SUN TA-supported districts used the baseline data to develop their work plans for July-December 2020. The rest used the results to develop action points which will inform the development of their annual work plans |
| 13. Number of SUN LE research reports uploaded onto NFNC website | NFNC website | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 50% | The first focused study (Literature Review on stunting in Zambia and the region) has been uploaded onto the NFNC website. |
| 14. Number of Policy Briefs and/or other communication products created based on SUN LE research | SUN LE programme reports | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 4 | 1.75 | 1 | 0 | 0.25 | 0.5 | 44% | Infographics (summarising the baseline survey findings) were created for each of the 30 districts for use in the district dissemination workshops. Some Policy briefs and summary reports will be finalised in Q4 2020 – based on the baseline survey |
| Outcome 1: Increased demand for SUN 2.0 data and information | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15. Number of downloads of SUN 2.0 survey data and information from NFNC | NFNC website metrics | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | Tracking of this indicator will begin once the NFNC |

| Indicator | Data Source | Baseline data | | 2019 Achieve ment | 2020 Cumulative Target | | Quarterly Status –2020 | | | | Annual Performance Achieved to Date (in %) | Comment(s) |
|---|---|---------------|-------|-------------------|------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| | | Year | Value | | Planned | Actual | Q1 (Jan-Mar) | Q2 (Apr-Jun) | Q3 (Jul-Sep) | Q4 (Oct-Dec) | | |
| website where data and information is hosted | | | | | | | | | | | | website is uploaded with SUN LE reports (Q4 2020). |
| Outcome 2: Improved SUN 2.0 implementation processes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16. Number of national-level stakeholders who report the application of SUN LE-generated knowledge to inform programme decisions/ policies or to take corrective action | Stakeholder surveys and/or Impact story | 2020 | 0 | N/A | 10 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 50% | From the stakeholder survey conducted in quarter 4, 5 national level stakeholders reported that they applied SUN LE-generated knowledge to inform programme decisions/ policies or to take corrective action |
| 17. Number of districts that demonstrate improvements in Performance Audit scores | Performance Audits | 2019 | 0 | N/A | N/A | N/A | - | - | - | - | N/A | Tracking of this indicator will be computed in Year 4 – after completion of the Year 4 performance audit |
| Outcome 3: Increased SUN 2.0 adaptive and participatory management | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18. Number of districts that made adjustments in SUN interventions (planning, goals, design) informed by data | Impact story tool administered to district stakeholders | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 30 | 30 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 21 | 100% | All the 30 target districts developed action plans based on the baseline survey dissemination and data use workshops and used these for their work plans |
| Outcome 4: Improved SUN 2.0 knowledge systems | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19. Number of stakeholders (individuals) who report that a SUN LE output | Post event surveys and/or impact stories | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 391 | 136 | 264% | Nearly all the participants in the district dissemination and data use workshops (529) and 5 at national level |

| Indicator | Data Source | Baseline data | | 2019 Achieve ment | 2020 Cumulative Target | | Quarterly Status –2020 | | | | Annual Performance Achieved to Date (in %) | Comment(s) |
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| | | Year | Value | | Planned | Actual | Q1 (Jan-Mar) | Q2 (Apr-Jun) | Q3 (Jul-Sep) | Q4 (Oct-Dec) | | |
| reinforced or validated existing knowledge | | | | | | | | | | | | reported that SUN LE output reinforced or validated their knowledge |
| 20. Number of stakeholders (individuals) who report that a SUN LE output provided them with new knowledge | Post event surveys and/or impact stories | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 348 | 130 | 956% | Nearly all the participants in the district dissemination and data use workshops (529) and 5 at national level reported that SUN LE output provided them with new knowledge |
| 21. Number of SUN 2.0 channels/ platforms that share information or data | Websites, and Social Media channels as well as conferences and meetings | 2019 | 0 | N/A | 5 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 160% | A Twitter account was established in Q1 to share SUN LE information. In Q2, SUN LE also shared the 2019 baseline results through district-level workshops. In addition, the districts also formed WhatsApp groups where baseline survey results and communication products (infographics, PowerPoint presentation, data use guidelines, etc.) were shared. In Q3, SUN LE results (district info graphics, the literature review report, national dissemination report and provincial/district data use training report) |

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|-----------|-------------|---------------|-------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| | | Year | Value | | Planned | Actual | Q1 (Jan- Mar) | Q2 (Apr- Jun) | Q3 (Jul- Sep) | Q4 (Oct- Dec) | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | were also shared through USAID DEC and DDL websites as well as NFNC website. The results are also shared through the quarterly TWG meetings (for example presentation of the RPA preliminary report in the Q4 TWG |

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